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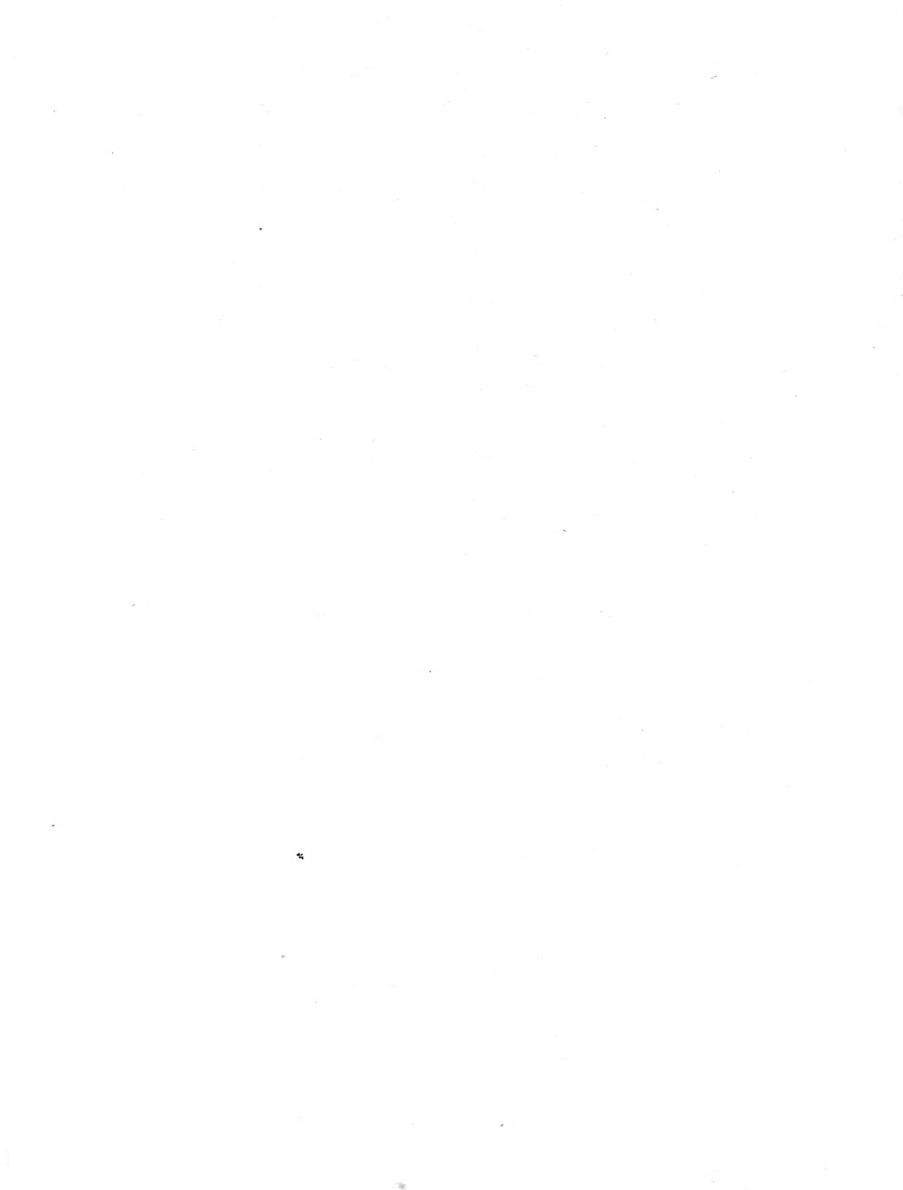
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LINCOLN

as President

BY
JNO. W. STARR, Jr.
Millersburg, Pa.



and friends

Geo. W. Stanton

Lincoln as President

AN ORATION

BY

JNO. W. STARR, Jr.

**Delivered June 4, 1906, at his graduation from the
Public Schools of Millersburg, Pa.**

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Jno. W. Starr, Jr.

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Foreword

In printing this short oration, I do so chiefly for my own gratification. It was written and delivered four years ago, when I graduated from our public schools. In explanation of the length, I may say that each scholar's production was limited to seven hundred words.

JNO. W. STARR, Jr.

LINCOLN AS PRESIDENT

HENEVER in history some great step in the onward march of civilization was about to be made, a leader from out among the people arose to inspire and guide to success his followers. Napoleon, Washington and Cromwell were such. But where in all history do we find one like our great Commoner, Abraham Lincoln, who proved himself at all times to be ready to lend his ear to the grievances of the people, whom he represented. He truly was the man for the place and time.

In his handling of public questions, he was undoubtedly one of the most successful Presidents. In appointing his cabinet—composed as it was of the ablest men of his own party—he showed a keen appreciation of the situation. Four of these men had been his chief competitors for the nomination at the Chicago convention in 1860. Seward, the Premier of his whole administration, was the recognized leader of his party in New York. Salmon P. Chase, by his handling of the government finances during the war, proved to be the best man for the position. Montgomery

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Blair, Postmaster General, represented the Blair family, one of large political influence. The remaining members of the cabinet, while not so prominent, were all men of ability. Thus at the very outset of his Presidential career we find him exercising that wonderful tact for which he was noted.

But never did his statesmanship show to better advantage than in the manner in which he handled the Trent affair. Only his calm judgment saved the Union from a third war with England. After Capt. Wilkes had taken the Confederate Commissioners, Mason and Slidell, from the English steamship, the whole country rang with acclamation. But Lincoln clearly saw the result of the retention of these prisoners, and by his orders they were freed.

In considering the emancipation problem, his good judgment again asserted itself. From the time of his inauguration, his abolitionist friends demanded that he issue an order freeing the slaves, but he saw that the opportune time had not yet arrived, and withheld the order. Meanwhile he made every peaceful effort possible, but seeing the futility of such measures, immediately after the battle of

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Antietam, in which Lee's advance was checked, he issued the preliminary draft Sept. 22, 1862.

One of Lincoln's sorest trials was his search for a general to command the Union forces. His first selection, General McClellan, proving a failure, he tried successively Generals Burnside, Hooker and Meade, none of whom proved fully competent to meet the responsibility of handling such a large force of men as the Army of the Potomac. Finally he determined to try a quiet little man by the name of Grant, who had been winning victories in the west. Lincoln's friends remonstrated, but he now saw that he had the right man, and determined to keep him in command. To find how Grant fulfilled his expectations, one has only to turn to the annals of history, and read his record there.

One of the most remarkable traits of Lincoln's composite nature was his ability to use the English language. His Gettysburg address has been called the best piece of prose ever written on this continent, and one of the best ever written in any language. His Cooper Union speech and his second Inaugural were both masterpieces.

His letters also show careful preparation, and stand as

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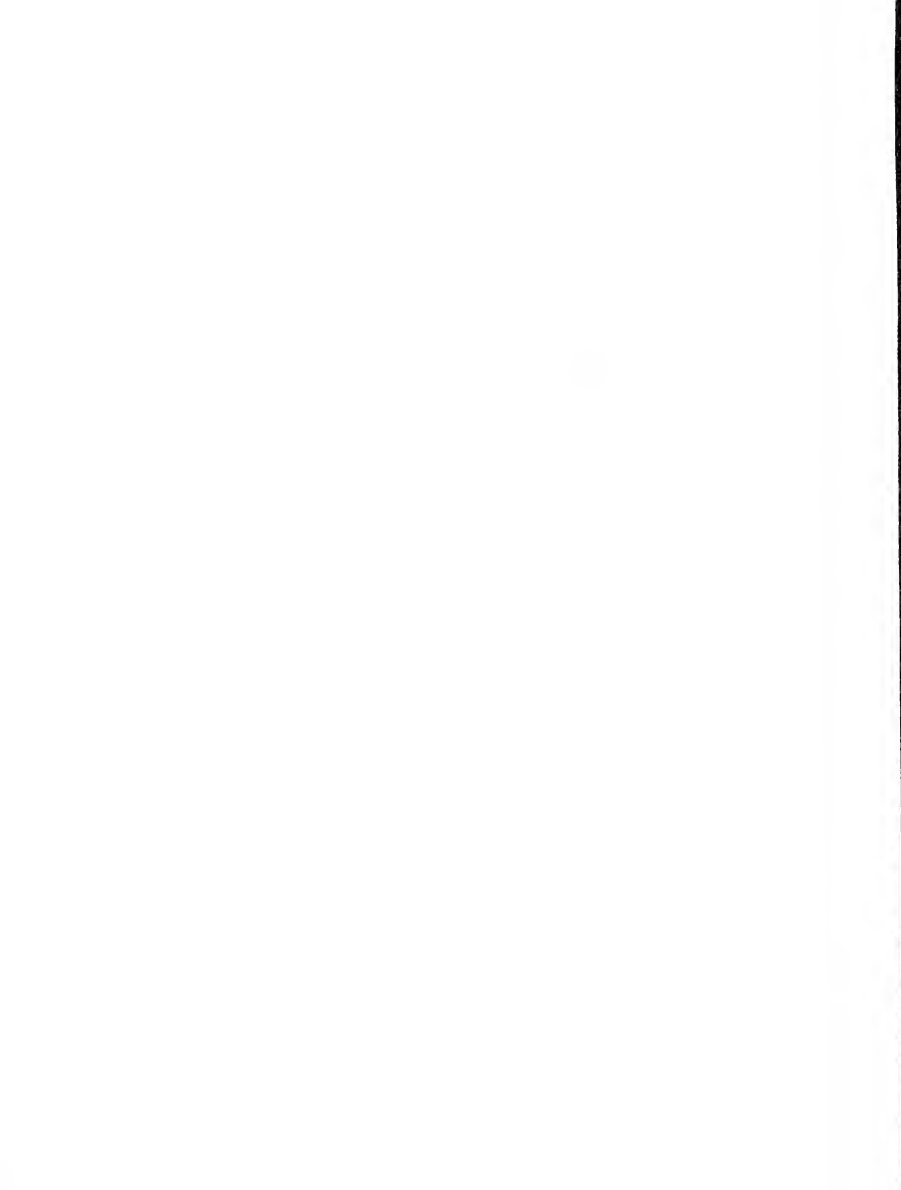
models for state papers. His communications to Horace Greely, Governor Hodges, and others, showing his relation to slavery, will always remain as good examples of English rhetoric.

As a man of the people, he understood what was due to humanity. During the war he was worried nearly to death by delegations and others, asking for the pardon of prisoners of war, deserters, cowards and the like. The Secretary of War and Generals in command were frequently much annoyed at being overruled. They thought the discipline and efficiency of the service was greatly endangered. Though kind-hearted to a fault, he always endeavored to be just, and tried to do what was right.

Thus in summing up his career as President, we may say that as a ruler of men he had few equals and no superiors, and as ages come and go it is not improbable that his name will stand at the head of the roster of the world's great men, and as a leader among men his fame will eclipse all others.

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